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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 JERUSALEM 001381

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NEA FOR FRONT OFFICE, NSC FOR ABRAMS/SINGH/PASCUAL

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/30/2018  
TAGS: [KWBG](#) [IS](#) [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [KISL](#)  
SUBJECT: PA CRACKS DOWN ON HIZB AL-TAHRIR, BANS PLANNED  
DEMONSTRATIONS

Classified By: Consul General Jake Walles, for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) Summary. PM Salam Fayyad told the Consul General July 28 that Hamas is supporting Hizb al-Tahrir's attempt to create unrest in the West Bank in a "marriage of convenience" between the Islamist groups. PA security contacts told PolOff and POL FSN July 27-29 that PA Interior Minister Abd al-Raziq al-Yahya issued orders prohibiting Hizb al-Tahrir demonstrations, planned for July 30-August 2, and security chiefs report they will carry out orders to stop the group's demonstrations. In Hebron, PA National Security Forces (NSF) and police prevented women from Hizb al-Tahrir from holding an indoor rally, and arrested 20 members in resultant clashes. Qalqiliya's NSF commander told PolOff July 29 that Hamas frequently colludes with Hizb al-Tahrir activists to cause disruptions and embarrass the PA, and his forces are ready to stop any disruptions by the group. End summary.

Fayyad: "Marriage of Convenience"  
Between Hizb al-Tahrir and Hamas  
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¶2. (C) PM Fayyad told the Consul General on July 28 that Hamas is supporting Hizb al-Tahrir's attempt to create unrest in the West Bank in a "marriage of convenience" between the two Islamist groups. He said he believes Hamas is funding Hizb al-Tahrir activities in the West Bank to undermine the PA. Fayyad noted that Hizb al-Tahrir is not an armed group, but it has the ability to assemble large crowds and create problems on the streets.

PA Forbids Planned Hizb al-Tahrir Demonstrations  
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¶3. (SBU) PA security contacts told PolOff and POL FSN July 27-29 that PA Interior Minister Abd al-Raziq al-Yahya issued orders prohibiting Hizb al-Tahrir demonstrations, planned July 30-August 2 to commemorate/mourn Mustafa Kemal's (Ataturk) abolition of the Ottoman Islamic Caliphate in 1924. Governorate National Security Forces (NSF) and police commanders in Ramallah, Nablus, Qalqiliya and Hebron told PolOff and POL FSN July 28-30 that they will carry out orders to stop "public disturbances," including Hizb al-Tahrir demonstrations.

¶4. (U) Palestinian press report that in Hebron PA NSF and police prevented women from Hizb al-Tahrir from holding an indoor rally, and arrested 20 members in resultant clashes. Hebron NSF commander BG Samih al-Sayfi told press that the PA had intelligence that Hizb al-Tahrir supporters would use the event to create chaos, and noted that in past gatherings the group had started violent disturbances.

¶5. (C) Qalqiliya NSF commander BG Faysal al-Bishtawi told PolOff July 29 that Hamas frequently colludes with Hizb al-Tahrir activists to cause disruptions and embarrass the PA. BG al-Bishtawi said the NSF dispersed a combined group

of Hizb al-Tahrir and Hamas protesters who sought to prevent the NSF from crossing from Qalqiliya to Habla on July 16, when the NSF launched a security campaign in the area. He said his forces are ready to stop any disruptions by the group, but complained that IDF restrictions on placement of NSF checkpoints and roadblocks inside Area A has reduced his ability to block large gatherings in the city center.

Comment

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¶6. (C) While the ideologies of Hamas and Hizb al-Tahrir are different, PM Fayyad and top PA Cabinet and security officials believe Hamas and Hizb al-Tahrir are cooperating locally to undermine the PA, which both groups view as illegitimate. While Hizb al-Tahrir's spokesmen deny any collusion, it is plausible that the group is partnering with Hamas to build public support and undermine the PA. The PA was roundly criticized for its heavy-handed dispersion of November Hizb al-Tahrir rallies in Hebron in November, and PA security chiefs say they learned from the experience and are well-prepared this time. End comment.

Background on Hizb al-Tahrir

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¶7. (SBU) Hizb al-Tahrir is a fundamentalist Sunni, pan-Islamist movement that seeks to create a global Islamic Caliphate. Starting as a tiny fringe movement in the 1950s (its most influential modern leader was Taqiuddin Ibrahim al-Nabhani (1909-1977) from Haifa), its contemporary followers have spread from London to Jakarta. Hizb al-Tahrir

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rejects Palestinian and pan-Arab nationalism, and opposes Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhood for their involvement in national politics. Hizb al-Tahrir by ideology is opposed to terrorism or the use of force (including against Israel) to achieve political ends, but allows force for the "defense of the community." In the West Bank/Gaza Strip, Hizb al-Tahrir is a small but well-organized and vocal collective with a strong presence at Jerusalem's al-Aqsa Mosque and in all Palestinian cities except Bethlehem. Their large demonstrations in Hebron and Ramallah in late 2007 caused the PA to view them as a security threat.

WALLES